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RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 8530
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0346
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TAGS: [KPKO](#) [MASS](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN MILITARY DELIVERS ITS AMISOM EQUIPMENT
WISH LIST

REF: PEROZO/BITTRICK EMAILS

Classified By: Political Counselor Walter Pflaumer for reasons 1.4. (b
& d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: On January 8, Embassy Abuja's Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) received the Nigerian Chief of Army Staff's (COAS) list of equipment requirements for the 231 Infantry Battalion, expected to be deployed to Somalia within the next few months. Pending since November 16, in Post's judgement the list seems to be reasonable, unencumbered by extraneous add-ons. The estimated total cost of providing all the equipment on the list, however, far exceeds the USD 3 million in assistance offered by the USG. Coming at a time when the Nigerian army continues to keep the Embassy at arm's length, and often appears to be paralyzed by internal rivalries between the COAS and the Chief of Defense Staff (CDS), the delivery of the list is a significant step toward Nigerian engagement in Somalia. In addition, it appears that the COAS will soon request ACOTA training for the identified battalion. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Per Post's judgement, the list is a reasonable run-down of what the 231 might need in Somalia, including around 20 APCs, cargo trucks, assault boats, mortars, anti-aircraft guns, ammunition, commo gear, office equipment, clothing, medical supplies, tools, and mess facilities. The total cost of providing all requested items, however, is estimated to be far beyond the USD 3 million the USG has offered. At this stage it is unclear where/how the CDS would procure the items we cannot provide, and how this might delay or affect deployment.

¶3. (C) Another positive development is that the COAS appears to have changed its position on ACOTA training for the 231 and is currently assessing its training deficiencies, with a formal request to follow in the near future. Previously, the Nigerians claimed that they were up to the task of preparing their troops for the Somali environment, and indeed claimed to have been doing so for some time. In the wake of the Haskanita debacle, however, and with the prospect of confronting an ideologically motivated enemy in an urban setting, Post doubts that Nigeria is up to the task.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: The January 8 delivery of the long-awaited equipment request for the 231's Somalia deployment is a welcome development (forwarded via email to AF/RSA the same

day) -- despite initial CDS requests and approvals, infighting between the Defense Headquarters and Army Headquarters delayed any positive movement. The original commitment to participate in AMISOM was made in February 2007 under the previous administration of Olesgun Obasanjo, and, with its armed forces already stretched thin due to domestic and international obligations, and the current administration's efforts to distance itself from the Obasanjo regime, it has been uncertain whether Nigeria would actually follow through. Post will continue to keep the Department apprised of further AMISOM-related developments. END COMMENT.
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